

Early Years Commissioning Team

Guidance Notes

Marketing

Why do you need a marketing strategy?

Effective marketing is essential to a sustainable childcare business. In conjunction with regulatory requirements, it can ensure you connect with your existing and future customers. This will help you to deliver a service that meets the needs of your community before entering the market, ensuring the success of your business.

Identifying your Unique Selling Point

You may be very confident that you know what your USP is for your target families. Childcare is a continuously changing market and price sensitive. It will be your ability to satisfy your customers' needs better than your competitors that will ultimately bring you new customers. By knowing as much as possible about your target audience, you will understand how best to reach them and what marketing methods will be most effective. It will also show that you value and respond to their opinions. It is likely that you will use a combination of methods to reach a diverse audience.

Branding and your identity

You will need to decide on your image and the impression you wish to create. This can include your name, your logo, the colours and fonts used and also some key words. You might include your vision statement. These elements of your brand or identity should be used for all your promotional activities and sources and will therefore become familiar within the community and help you stand out from other childcare providers.

Word of Mouth and Reputation

This has always been a very powerful form of marketing. Keep a book of references and thank you letters accessible and also on your website and social media. Ensure that staff understand that they are your ambassadors within the community and should remain aware of this when wearing your uniform or on their own social media sites. Ensure that you have a social media policy for staff.

Signage

Good quality signage will bring your service to the attention of the local community. Include your logo and contact details and make sure it is clear what services you offer. Ensure that you have obtained permission if necessary.

Make sure the outside of your premises is well maintained, clean and tidy. This will be the first thing that visitors encounter and their first impressions of you and your staff need to be favourable. Periodically walk the perimeter and try to see the premises as if for the first time to make sure you are creating the best impression possible.

Promotional Material

These can be in the form of newsletters, leaflets, posters, banners or postcards and you will decide between these based on the method of distribution and the target audience. If you are only trying to reach existing

Further advice

For further advice regarding marketing a childcare business, or details about training, contact the Early Years Commissioning Team on email: childcarebusinessadvice@surreycc.gov.uk